

Serial No. 09/827,031
Docket No. 40655.1000

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-20 (cancelled)

21. (NEW) A computer-implemented method for facilitating an auction comprising:
storing in a database a consumer defined purchase rule for a selected item;
retrieving a subset of consumer information, wherein said subset comprises consumer information having a similar said consumer defined purchase rule;
providing said subset to a vendor offering said item;
accepting a bid for said vendor to provide said item to said subset;
verifying that said bid is in accordance with said consumer defined purchase rule; and,
confirming that said bid is an optimum bid.
22. (NEW) The method of claim 21, further comprising notifying said consumer of said optimum bid.
23. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said confirming step comprises determining if said bid provides optimum savings for said consumer.
24. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said verifying step comprises evaluating said bid based on a proposed price and a proposed provision of said item.
25. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said storing step comprises storing in a database an deviation to said rule.
26. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said storing step comprises storing in a database a restriction upon a deviation from said rule.
27. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said item comprises at least one of an airline reservation, automobile rental reservation, and hotel reservation.

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28. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said retrieving step comprises scanning said database to determine rows of consumer information with a similar said consumer defined purchase rule, placing said rows of a similar said consumer defined purchase rule into said subset, wherein said database comprises a plurality of rows.

29. (NEW) The method of claim 28, wherein an individual row of said rows is placed into more than one of said subset.

30. (NEW) The method of claim 28, wherein said rows are similar when said consumer defined purchase rule differs by less than a predetermined criteria.

31. (NEW) The method of claim 21, wherein said item comprises at least one of a good and service.

32. (NEW) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, said plurality of instructions when executed by a processor, cause said processor to perform a method comprising the steps of:

- storing in a database a consumer defined purchase rule for a selected item;
- retrieving a subset of consumer information, wherein said subset comprises consumer information having a similar said consumer defined purchase rule;
- providing said subset to a vendor offering said item;
- accepting a bid for said vendor to provide said item to said subset;
- verifying that said bid is in accordance with said consumer defined purchase rule; and,
- confirming that said bid is an optimum bid.